

Bad Guilt

Posted by Captain - 13 Nov 2019 19:31

While guilt can sometimes be good for us, often it ends up being bad for us. Sometimes it gets us to give up. Sometimes we end up stuck in the same behavior and don't get out because we identify as a person who "does those things." And there are many other ways guilt can keep us stuck.

I found a great section on this subject from *The Battle of the Generation* (<https://guardyoureyes.com/ebooks/item/the-battle-of-the-generation>). It really resonated with me, and I wanted to share it with everyone. Here is a quote from the book (pages 347-348):

When you sin, the *yetzer hara* might cause some of the following thoughts:

"I am a failure. The sin I just did makes me worthless. I am off the *derech*, exactly like those who have rejected everything. I am just as bad. I am a sinner.

"I should have controlled myself. I could have done better. If I had just pushed myself harder, I would have won the battle. It would have been so simple for me to control myself had I tried harder, but I blew it again! I should have much more control over myself.

"I am so ashamed. I'm embarrassed to even go near anybody. Anyone who would know what I did would look down on me. Nobody would empathize with me about my struggles, not that there is much to empathize with anyway. Everybody does much better than me. I am probably the only person who does these things. No one else sins in this area, and I give in left and right. I am messed up.

"All the good I ever did is meaningless because I did this huge sin. I am horrible. How hard I fought and my effort to change myself is irrelevant; my sin is all that matters.

"Even though I labored and managed to control myself for the past two days, two weeks, or two months, that is worthless. I am the same out of control person I always was. All my effort was a waste; I'm just as horrible as I was before.

"Besides, any good I did doesn't count because I was obligated to do it anyway. All that matters is falling short — which I just did when I violated my obligations.

"I bet Hashem is furious with me. He hates me and has rejected me. It is hopeless! He will always look down on me. Even if I do *teshuva*, Hashem won't accept it. It's impossible to undo something this severe. I did it; how can I get rid of it?

"Further, what happened is all my fault. I brought everything upon myself when I befriended those people and experimented with these sins. Had I controlled myself then, things would be so easy. If I didn't watch those movies and hang out with those friends, I would still be pure. I activated my desires.

“And now that I have awakened my temptations, it is too late. I can’t stop myself. I am incapable, as I just proved. I *do* these things. I am an addict and I will never regain control, no matter what I do. I can’t even improve the situation. I’m doomed.”

These thoughts intensify the more severe the sin is. They are especially tough when it is something you haven’t done before. You feel so guilty, worthless, and helpless that it keeps you stuck in the muck. The first step is to realize that these thoughts come from the *yetzer hara*. They destroy your drive to serve Hashem and stop you from improving. That automatically shows it’s one of his tricks, no matter how convincing these arguments seem. Then, we can think about the situation rationally and figure out how these thoughts are incorrect.

Do any of these resonate with you? Are you able to see such thoughts making it harder for you to break free?

(See the book for more on how to deflect these thoughts, starting on page 348. Or start from the beginning of the chapter on page 341. Download the book here: <https://guardyoureyes.com/ebooks/item/the-battle-of-the-generation>.)

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Re: Bad Guilt
Posted by farblunjet - 14 Nov 2019 17:55

yes!

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Re: Bad Guilt
Posted by Captain - 16 Nov 2019 23:34

This really resonated with me, because I'm pretty sure I've been attacked by every one at some point or another.

Which ones are most common for you? And do they cause you to remain stuck?

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Re: Bad Guilt
Posted by David26fr - 19 Nov 2019 07:56

For me, all of them...

The YH tries with all these tricks, he has no preference

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Re: Bad Guilt
Posted by Captain - 22 Nov 2019 21:09

Yeah, me too. It's really rough. I've found this chapter helpful though.

How do you deal with them?

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